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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/23/2029  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKEY: SCENESETTER FOR DIRECTOR MUELLER'S VISIT

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Jeffrey. Reasons: 1.4 (B,D)

Welcome  
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¶1. (C) Coming in the wake of the hugely successful visits of President Obama and Secretary Clinton, the GOT will warmly welcome your visit as a further sign that Washington views Turkey as an important strategic partner. It will be seen as yet another indication of U.S. respect for Turkey's international role and domestic progress. Despite turmoil and unrest in its neighborhood, Turkey has remained an island of relative stability and a valuable, if complicated, NATO ally. Your visit comes just five days after Armenian Remembrance Day. If the traditional White House statement on that day uses the term genocide, the Turks may cancel your visit. If not, you will hear harsh words from your interlocutors and should expect a slowing of Turkish cooperation in a number of areas.

Key Issues to Raise  
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¶2. (C) During your meetings with Interior Minister Atalay, Turkish National Intelligence Organization (TNIO) Undersecretary Taner and Turkish National Police (TNP) Director-General Koksal, I suggest you raise the following key issues:

-- Proposed New CT Structure. The Turkish government has been discussing a proposed new counterterrorism structure since last fall. MOI Undersecretary Gunes accepted our invitation to visit Washington to discuss our own "lessons learned" but has not set a date. (see para 4)

-- Changes to Turkish CT Laws. Turkish CT laws, amended in 2005 do not consider an attack outside Turkey or in Turkey against non-Turks to be a terrorist attack. We are looking for creative ways to get the Turks to amend this law. (see para 5)

-- High-level CT Dialogue. Turkey accepted in principle our proposal to begin a high-level interagency CT dialogue, but has not yet agreed to a date. (see para 6)

-- Information-sharing Initiatives. Last year we offered several information-sharing programs to the Turkish government but have not received responses, despite repeated follow-up inquiries. (see para 7)

## Watch Out For

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¶3. (C) The Turkish National Police value past training and other instructional opportunities from the Bureau. Your interlocutors may seek assistance in new areas. One possibility is protection of nuclear facilities. (see para 8)

## Counterterrorism Restructuring

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¶4. (C) Mounting frustration at the Turkish military-led counterterrorism effort prompted extensive discussion late last year and led to the unveiling of a proposed new structure: a counterterrorism undersecretariat within the Ministry of the Interior (MOI). Contacts tell us the new organization will focus on two primary tasks: coordinating the GOT's "strategic messaging" to counter PKK propaganda efforts and improving intelligence sharing among entities with counterterrorism responsibilities. On intelligence sharing, few would dispute that intelligence remains badly stove-piped throughout Turkey's various security services. The new body would be tasked to improve communication among the services. Details on the new structure remain murky and some skeptics suggest bureaucratic resistance from the powerful military and the TNIO will stymie the initiative. Nonetheless, we are encouraged by the fact that MOI Undersecretary Gunes accepted former State Department Counterterrorism Coordinator Dailey's invitation to visit Washington to discuss "lessons learned" during our own post-9/11 counterterrorism restructuring. You might remind MOI Minister Atalay of this initiative and urge the Turks to set a date for the visit.

## Counterterrorism Legislation

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¶5. (C) Turkey was one of the few states to define terrorism prior to September 11. Its main legal provisions are set forth in its 1991 anti-terrorism law, and a 2005 provision of the Turkish Criminal Code. Under current Turkish law, only those individuals targeting Turks or the Turkish state can be prosecuted for terrorism. The Turks have maintained that the law, in conjunction with the 13 international conventions they have signed, allows for adequate prosecution and punishment of terrorism offenses. Our Resident Legal Advisor (RLA) is examining possible ways to strengthen Turkey's CT legislation. To that end, she hosted a successful study visit for a group of MOJ counterterrorism legislation experts to Washington in early 2009. You might remind your interlocutors that we remain concerned about the narrow focus of Turkey's terrorism law.

## High-level CT Dialogue

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¶6. (C) While the PKK dominates the CT agenda here, authorities are increasingly aware of threats from the Al Qaeda network and other groups and are receptive to broader bilateral cooperation. Our Combined Intelligence Fusion Cell (CIF-C) is a model of military-to-military intelligence cooperation that has resulted in crippling PKK operations in northern Iraq. Indeed, it is a model that the U.S. hopes to emulate on the Pakistan-Afghan border. We hope to expand this strong cooperation beyond PKK-related issues. During the November 2008 visit by DOS S/CT Coordinator Dailey, we proposed a broader high-level CT dialogue. Although the Turks have expressed interest, they have resisted setting a date for talks, citing the fact that the CT Coordinator-equivalent position in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remains vacant.

## Information-sharing Initiatives

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¶7. (C) Last year we offered several information-sharing

programs to the GOT. We have been told by the MFA that the Turkish Government looks favorably on receiving TIP/PISCES and HSPD-6 systems from us, but is still determining what legislative framework must be established first. The GOT has yet to respond to a separate USG proposal to share terrorist biometric data.

#### Possible Request for Assistance

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18. (C) Turkish officials value the law enforcement assistance we have provided in the past and they may take advantage of your visit to request more. One possible area is the protection of nuclear facilities. In 2008 Turkey solicited tenders for its first civilian nuclear power plant, a 4,000 MW facility. Largely because of lack of clarity in the tender specifications, particularly regarding liability, a Russian consortium was the only bidder. That bid is now being evaluated and a decision is expected any day. The new plant would not go online for at least eight years. In the interim, TNP officials have quietly approached us asking how the FBI manages intelligence as it relates to nuclear facilities. They may pursue this issue with you.

#### Background

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19. (C) For many years, and particularly since the start of the Iraq war in 2003, our bilateral relationship was strained by the commonly held perception in Turkey that the United States was doing too little to help it with its primary security issue - the decades-long struggle against its Kurdish PKK insurgency. The US declared the PKK a foreign terrorist organization in 1997. President Bush's November 2007 decision to share actionable intelligence on the PKK in northern Iraq marked a major positive turning point for U.S.-Turkey relations. Turkey already provides vital support to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan through the Incirlik Cargo Hub. The primary point of tension in the relationship remains the annual debate in the U.S. Congress over the Armenian genocide issue. President Obama, who supported resolutions in the past, alluded to the issue during his visit without using the word genocide.

110. (C) Turkey has worked hard under PM Erdogan to play a more active role in the region and to improve relations with its neighbors. Our own improved intelligence sharing against the PKK in northern Iraq helped facilitate better relations between Ankara, the Iraqi central government, and Iraqi Kurds. The Turks use their relations with Iran to press Teheran to abandon its nuclear weapons program and stop supporting terrorist groups. Likewise, we want the GOT to encourage Syria to do more against terrorist facilitators. We welcome Turkey's promised additional commitments in Afghanistan and its expressed willingness to play a larger role in "soft power" activities in Pakistan. We strongly support eventual full Turkish membership in the EU, believing this will anchor Turkey more firmly in the Western orbit.

111. (C) Domestically, the Turkish government is dominated by one party, the mildly Islamic AKP (Justice and Development Party), led by PM Erdogan. Although the party came out ahead in March 2009 local elections, their lead was smaller than expected and chastened somewhat the confident Mr. Erdogan. With the election now over, observers hope the government will begin to tackle some of the sensitive issues that had been postponed, including relations with Cyprus and freedom of expression. Turkey is by far the strongest democracy in the region. Efforts by the military in 2007 to pressure or even oust the Erdogan government worried many. The government's own more recent attacks on the media and apparent efforts to exploit investigations of alleged coup attempts by groups associated with the military ("Ergenekon") to attack political opponents have also raised concerns about the soundness of Turkey's democratic institutions.

112. (C) Part of the AKP's popularity since assuming power in

2002 stemmed from its economic success and growth rates near 10 percent for several years. Turkey was slow to feel the effects of the global economic slowdown, but recently has been hit hard on exports and jobs. Unemployment now stands at 15.5 percent, the highest ever since these statistics have been recorded. The GOT continues negotiating a new \$20-35 billion stand-by agreement with the IMF.

#### Bilateral Cooperation

¶13. (C) We already enjoy a sound working relationship with the Turkish intelligence community which we also hope to strengthen. Our LEGATT has established a close relationship with the Turkish National Police (TNP); these ties were instrumental in bringing down an Al Qaeda cell here in January 2008. Our RLA is also working with the Ministry of Justice to enhance CT-related extradition cooperation with our EU partners.

¶14. (C) Our Regional CT Coordinator, together with the LEGATT, is supporting a TNP effort to establish a behavioral analysis (i.e., profiling) unit which will facilitate screening of potential terrorists. Separately, the LEGATT and EXBIS are working with TNP to develop a credible WMD response capability. Last August, EXBIS provided radiation detection equipment and isotope identifiers to the TNP. LEGATT is also working with other TNP units with WMD responsibility to provide equipment and training.

¶15. (U) We look forward to your visit.

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<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Turkey>

Jeffrey